

Novel Approaches to College Choice: A Survey of Postsecondary Opportunities



presented by

Houston D. Davis

Brian E. Noland

Russ Deaton

Association for Institutional Research Annual Conference

Long Beach, California

June 3-6, 2001

Our Primary Focus



- ⌘ Understand the reasons why students choose to continue their education past high school.
- ⌘ Gauge the factors that have the most influence on an individual student's college choice decision.

The Tennessee Terrain



- ⌘ One-third of the adult population in Tennessee does not possess a high school diploma.
- ⌘ Only 17.7 percent of that same group have obtained a bachelors degree compared to the national average of 24 percent (NCHEMS, 1997).
- ⌘ Approximately 56% of Tennessee high school graduates continue on to higher education.

Literature Review



⌘ Model of student college choice by Hossler and Gallagher (1987):

- ☒ Predisposition - whether or not to continue formal education
- ☒ Search - consideration of higher education characteristics
- ☒ Choice - developing criteria and selecting an institution

Literature Review



⌘ Academic Ability - GPA, Test scores, etc.

☒ Hossler, Schmitt & Vesper (1999); Hearn (1991 & 1984); Chapman (1981)

⌘ Race

☒ Perna (2000); Freeman (1999); Hossler, Schmitt & Vesper (1999); McDonough, Antonio & Trent (1997)

⌘ Parents & Family - Education, Income, Support

☒ Lillard & Gerner (1999); Hossler, Schmitt & Vesper (1999); McDonough, Lising & Trent (1997); Litten (1982) Hearn (1991 & 1984)

⌘ Cost

☒ Perna (2000); Heller (1997); Leslie & Brinkman (1987) Chapman (1981)

The “Reverse Lens” Mechanism



- ⌘ As noted by Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith (1989), higher education policy makers would benefit greatly from heightened knowledge of the college choice patterns of the constituents that they serve.
- ⌘ Such awareness could provide insight to market perceptions and allow policy makers to see themselves as seen by students - a “reverse lens” mechanism. (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989).



⌘ Go into methodology, etc. here